

CHIPS Frequently Asked Questions

- 1) Q: What action should I take as a counselor when the CHIPS database will not allow me to enter a student and the rejection message indicates the social security number already exists in CHIPS?

A: The rejection is most often related to the social security number you are attempting to enter has previously been entered in the CHIPS database. CHIPS will NOT allow duplicate social security numbers to exist in the database. The duplication may be due to:

- 1) you have already entered the student in the current year entry and are attempting to re-enter the student for a second time.
- 2) the same student was entered into CHIPS in a previous year but did not graduate and you now are attempting to re-enter the student for the current year.
- 3) *another or the same* high school for a *different* student has been entered in CHIPS in the current or previous year(s). A CHIPS Status Code Column is provided for high school guidance counselors to identify questionable social security numbers for review and correction. If the original social security number entered into CHIPS is not corrected by the other high school that first entered the social security number the entry you are now trying to make will be rejected.

ACTION:

First check the list of entries to see if you have already entered the student in the current year. Ask the student to verify their name and social security number (showing the counselor their social security card) to verify if what you are entering matches the social security card please, then call the SSACI 317-232-2368 Grant Division. SSACI will need your student's name, social security number, date of birth, year of graduation, and diploma type based upon SSACI's GPA criteria. SSACI will research and resolve the discrepancy with the other high school and contact you when it is clear to enter your student's data into CHIPS if appropriate.

- 2) Q: What impact does inaccuracy in CHIPS data entry have on the student and high school?

A: Errors in data entry result in the inability to match the student's Core 40 or Academic Honors subsidy rate with the student's application for financial aid (FAFSA) which may result in lost state grant funding to the student throughout their undergraduate career. In addition, colleges that use our information to identify students for an additional federal grant called Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG) at \$750 the first academic year and \$1300 the second year may too be in jeopardy.

ACTION:

Discrepancies may be identified in the CHIPS database under the "Status Code Column". Counselors will need to follow the CHIPS instructions (<http://www.in.gov/ssaci/highschool/2007CHIPSInstructions.pdf> page 14) that lists the codes, what they mean, and what action needs to be taken to correct the error.

State Student Assistance Commission of Indiana

This action will allow a data match to occur if a FAFSA is filed and received at SSACI, and to provide a correct award subsidy rate to be provided in the calculation of the student's eligibility for a state grant.

- 3) Q: Why is it important to enter students into the CHIPS Database on or before March 23, 2007?
- A: Preliminary award letters are sent to students by colleges outlining a student's financial aid package to attend that particular institution. The aid package provides families with a portion of the information to help them decide where the student will attend college. CHIPS information entered by the March deadline helps to ensure that the preliminary award letters provide state awards that resemble what their final state award will be.
- 4) Q: Why is it necessary to update a student's status on or before June 29, 2007 after the initial reporting that was done by March 23, 2007?
- A: State grant award letters are sent out at the beginning of July and awards are made known to the college financial aid office at that same time. Therefore in order to provide the student and school with an accurate assessment of a student's final state grant eligibility, your updated assessment must be manually entered by SSACI into the CHIPS database on or before June 29, 2007.
- 5) Q: What should be done with any student who completes the SSACI criteria or has changes in their initial eligibility that was entered into CHIPS for Core 40 or Academic Honors after the final data entry deadline of June 29, 2007 (i.e. student took summer classes and graduated after June 29, 2007)?
- A: Although CHIPS will be closed to your entering of the data after June 29th, SSACI does have the ability to update CHIPS for you and make the necessary changes to either add a student into the database, update a student's status by changing to Core 40 from Academic Honors, Academic Honors from Core 40, or updating the student to a status of "Neither" (not eligible for Core 40 or Academic Honors status).

ACTION:

The guidance counselor will need to contact Kathi Graves at SSACI 317-232-2368 as the CHIPS database is no longer available for a counselor's entry as of June 29, 2007. All updates must be manually entered by SSACI. On letterhead stationery the guidance counselor will need to provide the student's name, social security number, date of birth, diploma type, and cumulative GPA on a 4.0 scale. (see CHIPS Instructions <http://www.in.gov/ssaci/highschool/instructions.html>)

- 6) Q: Is rounding of a student's Grade Point Average (GPA) acceptable when determining whether to report the student into CHIPS as Core 40 or Academic Honors (student has the 2.0 or 3.0 respectively on a 4.0 scale)?
- A. Rounding of a GPA is not acceptable during any intermediary steps in

State Student Assistance Commission of Indiana

converting your high school's grading scale to the 4.0 scale that SSACI requires. In addition, rounding up Grade Point Averages for those schools that exist on a 4.0 scale is also not acceptable. However, the decision to report a student's GPA on a 4.0 scale (Core 40 at least a 2.0 on a 4.0 scale, Academic Honors at least a 3.0 on a 4.0 scale) may be truncated to the third decimal point as illustrated below.

EXAMPLE:

A 2.9876 Grade Point Average (GPA) on a 4.0 scale may be truncated to 2.988 yet may not be reported as Academic Honors into the CHIPS Database (The student did not reach the 3.0 GPA required for Academic Honors designation). However, if the student did complete the Core 40 curriculum, the student could be reported in the CHIPS database as Core 40.

EXAMPLE:

A 1.9976 Grade Point Average (GPA) on a 4.0 scale may be truncated to 1.998, yet the student should not be reported in the CHIPS database as Core 40 (The student did not reach the 2.0 required by SSACI at Graduation). If the student was reported in the CHIPS database initially by the March deadline as the student had above a 2.0 at the time, but the student's final graduation GPA became 1.9976 the counselor the GPA cannot be rounded up as a 2.0 and CHIPS would need to be updated from Core 40 to the "Neither" status.

7) Q: Why is it important to review and work the "Status Column" in the CHIPS Database?

A: An attempt to match the CHIPS data your school entered with the GRADS (FAFSA) data is made on a weekly schedule. The data match has an outcome indicated by a Status Code reflected in the Status Code Column in CHIPS. If the data elements in CHIPS (Social Security Number-SSN, Last name, First name, DOB) do not match GRADS (FAFSA), then no match for the increased subsidy rate in calculating the student's state grant award can take place. This could mean the information in CHIPS has been entered incorrectly, that the student made an error on the FAFSA information (s)he submitted (name, date of birth, or social security number), or the student has not filed a FAFSA, any of which will not allow for a match of information to take place. You may need to take additional action to resolve the discrepancy.

ACTION: (See Page 13 of the CHIPS Instructions for further detail
<http://www.in.gov/ssaci/highschool/2007CHIPSInstructions.pdf>)

Code	Meaning	Action
DB	Date of Birth does not match GRADS	Double check the Date of Birth in CHIPS and tell the student to check the FAFSA. Correct the one in error.
DE	Deactivated program (AHD or C40) for student	Check that you intended the program to change to Neither.

State Student Assistance Commission of Indiana

Code	Meaning	Action
DN	Neither Date of Birth nor Name match, possibly SSN is incorrect. Information reported in CHIPS does not match information in GRADS.	Double check the Date of Birth and Last Name in CHIPS and tell the student to check the FAFSA, but if they are correct, it may be necessary to call SSACI (Kathi Graves) at 317-232-2368.
IN	Inserted program (AHD or C40) into GRADS	This is good news; code should change to OK the following week.
NF	No FAFSA exists for the current year but a FAFSA does exist for the previous year	No award can be granted. Encourage the student to file the current year FAFSA.
NM	Last Name does not match GRADS	Double check the Last Name in CHIPS and have student check the FAFSA. (There may be a typo in CHIPS or hyphenated name problem) Correct the one in error.
SN	SSN does not match GRADS	No FAFSA on file with SSACI and no award can be granted, therefore encourage the student to file the current year FAFSA. If the student filed the FAFSA but did not list "IN" as the legal state of residence SSACI would not receive the FAFSA information. If reported in error, encourage the student to correct the error with the federal processor on or before June 11, 2007 SSACI deadline.
OK	Program currently exists	The data in CHIPS matches the data in GRADS.

8) Q: Why should you contact SSACI when the CHIPS Status Column reflects a code of "DN"?

A: Double check the Date of Birth and Last Name you entered into the CHIPS database, and tell the student to check the same information (s)he completed on the FAFSA, but if the information is still correct, please call SSACI (Kathi Graves) at 317-232-2368 to pursue the issue further.